

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 038010 TOSEC 040028

FOL RPT 1025 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN LONDON PARIS
17 FEB.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1025

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO
SUBJ: POSSIBLE RECOGNITION BY GOP OF MPLA

REF: STATE 37673, STATE 27568

1. MELO ANTUNES SUMMONED ME AT 1:00 P.M. LOCAL TODAY FEB 17 TO DISCUSS ANGOLA. HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH HARTMAN WHICH HE UNDERSTOOD TO MEAN THAT US WOULD CONSULT GOP BEFORE ANY POLICY CHANGE. I CONFIRMED THIS WAS THE INTENT. HE SAID HE ALSO INTERPRETED HIS CONVERSATION TO MEAN THAT GOP SHOULD CONSULT USG BEFORE IT CHANGES POLICY. PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING WAS TO (A) BRING ME UP TO DATE ON DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN GOP, (B) ASK IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY CHANGES IN USG POLICY AND (C) SEEK USG VIEWS ON WHAT KIND OF APPROACH EUROPEANS MIGHT TAKE TO MPLA, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF MPLA RECOGNITION BY FRANCE.

2. MELO ANTUNES SAID HE HAD BEEN INFORMED LAST WEEK,
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AS HAD USG, OF FRANCE'S INTENTION TO RECOGNIZE. THIS

HAD SET OFF AN INTENSE DEBATE WITHIN GOP WHICH WAS STILL "FAR FROM A CONSENSUS." ANTUNES SAID HIS PERSONAL POSITION WAS WELL KNOWN. HE FELT GOP RECOGNITION WOULD HELP REDUCE DEPENDENCE OF MPLA ON SOVIETS AND CUBANS. IT WOULD ALSO ENABLE WEST TO COLLABORATE WITH MORE MODERATE FACTIONS WITHIN MPLA.

3. ANTUNES SAID HE HAD USED HIS PERSONAL CONTACTS TO STABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH THE MPLA, AND WAS CONFIDENT THAT SUBSEQUENT EVENTS WOULD VINDICATE HIS POSITION. MPLA IS ANXIOUS TO DEMONSTRATE ITS INDEPENDENCE OF SOVIETS THROUGH BROADENED RELATIONS WITH WEST. HIS PERSONAL CONTACTS HAD SPECIFICALLY INDICATED THEY WOULD WELCOME RELATIONS WITH US. ANTUNES SAID IF USG WISHED, HE WOULD BE GLAD TO HELP US INITIATE AN INFORMAL DIALOGUE WITH MPLA.

4. I TOLD MELO ANTUNES USG DID NOT INTEND TO RECOGNIZE MPLA AT PRESENT TIME. I RECOUNTED FOR HIM OUR EFFORTS WITH THE EUROPEANS PER REFTELS. SAID I DID NOT KNOW HOW FRENCH RECOGNITION WOULD AFFECT THESE EFFORTS. ANTUNES EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT GOP HAD NOT TAKEN ANY DECISION AND WAS FAR FROM CONSENSUS, BUT HE WOULD APPRECIATE A NEW READING FROM WASHINGTON IN LIGHT OF FRENCH RCOGNITION. I PROMISED TO TRY TO GET BACK TO HIM TODAY.
CARLUCCI

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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